

“Where is the New Theology Leading Us?”

by Fr. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P.
Translated from the French by Suzanne M. Rini

Editor's note: *Catholic Family News* proudly presents its exclusive English translation of Father Garrigou-Lagrange's landmark work, “*La nouvelle théologie où va-t-elle?*”, which was first published in 1946 in Rome's *Angelicum*, one of the most prestigious theological journals in the world. Father Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P. one of the greatest Thomistic theologians of this century, warned that the “New Theology” of Maurice Blondel, Henri de Lubac, etc. is nothing more than a revitalized Modernism. This same new theology was subsequently condemned by Pope Pius XII in *Humani Generis*. This article, because of its in-depth nature, is meant not only to be read, but studied. It is hoped that the publication of this work will help dispel the widespread confusion of our time, especially since, by admission of its own adherents, this modernist “new theology” has become “the official theology of Vatican II”.

In a recent book, *Conversion et grâce chez S. Thomas d'Aquin*¹ (“Conversion and Grace in St. Thomas Aquinas”), Father Henri Boulliard writes, “Since spirit evolves, an unchanging truth can only maintain itself by virtue of a simultaneous and co-relative evolution of all ideas, each proportionate to the other. A theology which is not current [does not keep changing — SMR] will be a false theology.”²

And in the pages preceding and following [the above quotation], the author demonstrates that the theology of St. Thomas, in several of its most important sections, is not current. For example, St. Thomas' idea of sanctifying grace was as a *form* (a basic principle of supernatural operations which the infused virtues and the seven gifts have as their principle). “The ideas employed by St. Thomas are simply Aristotelian notions applied to theology.”³

And further: “By renouncing the Aristotelian system, modern thought abandoned the ideas, design and dialectical opposites which only made sense as functions of that system.”⁴ Thus modern thought abandoned the notion of *form*.

How then can the reader evade the conclusion, namely that, since it is no longer current, the theology of St. Thomas is a false theology?

But then why have the Popes so often

instructed us to follow the doctrine of St. Thomas? Why does the Church say in her Code of Canon Law, Can. 1366, n.2:

“The professors should by all means treat of the rational philosophy and theology, and the training of the students in these subjects according to the method, doctrine and principles of the Angelic Doctor (Aquinas), and should hold these as “sacred”?”⁵

Further, how can “an unchanging truth” maintain itself if the two notions united by the verb *to be*, are essentially variable or changeable?

An unchangeable relationship can only be conceived of as such if there is something unchangeable in the two terms that it unites. Otherwise, for all intents and purposes, it's like saying that the waves of the sea can be stapled together.

Of course, the two ideas that are united in an unchangeable affirmation are sometimes at first confused and then distinguished one from the other, such as the ideas of nature, of person, substance, accident, transubstantiation, the Real Presence, sin, original sin, grace, etc. But if these are not

fundamentally unchangeable, how then will the affirmation which unites them by the verb "to be" be unchangeable? How can one hold that the Real Presence of the substance of the Body of Christ in the Eucharist requires transubstantiation if the ideas are fundamentally variable? How can one assert that original sin occurred in us through a willed fault of the first man, if the notion of original sin is essentially unstable? How can one hold that the particular judgment after death is eternally irrevocable, if these ideas are said to change? Finally, how can one maintain that all of these propositions are invariably true if the idea of truth itself must change, and if one must substitute for the traditional definition of truth (the conformity of judgment to intuitive reality and to its immutable laws) what has been proposed in recent years by the philosophy of action: the conformity of judgment to the exigencies of action, or to human life, which is always evolving?

★ ★ ★ ★

1. Do the Dogmatic Formulae Themselves Retain Their Immutability?

Father Henri Boulliard⁶ responds: "The affirmation which is expressed in them remains." But, he adds:⁷

"Perhaps one might wonder if it is still possible to assert the contingency of the ideas implied in the conciliar definitions? Will it not compromise the irreformable character of these definitions? The Council of Trent (sess. 6, cap. 7, can. 10) *par excellence*, in its teaching on justification, employs the idea of *formal cause*. Consequently, did it not enshrine this term and confer a definitive character upon the idea of grace as a form? *Not at all*. It was certainly not the intention of the Council to canonize an Aristotelian idea, nor even a theological idea conceived under the influence of Aristotle. It simply wished to affirm, against the Protestants, that justification is an interior renewal. Toward this end, it used some shared theological ideas of the times. *But one can substitute others for these, without modifying the sense of its teaching.*" (Emphasis mine.)

Undoubtedly, the Council did not canonize the

Aristotelian idea of form with all of its relations to other ideas of the Aristotelian system. But it approved it as a *stable human idea*, in the sense that we speak of everything that formally constitutes a thing (in this case, justification).⁸ In this sense, it speaks of sanctifying grace as distinct from actual grace, by saying that it is a supernatural gift, infused, which is inherent in the soul and by which man is formally saved.⁹ If the Council defined faith, hope and charity as permanently infused virtues, their radical principle (habitual or sanctifying grace) must also be a permanently infused gift, and from that, distinct from actual grace or from a divine, transitory action.

But how can one maintain the sense of this teaching of the Council of Trent, namely that "sanctifying grace is the formal cause of salvation"? I do not say, if "*one substitutes a verbal equivalent*"; I say with Father Henri Boulliard "if one substitutes another idea".

If it is another idea, then it is no longer that of *formal cause*: Then it is also no longer true to say with the Council: "Sanctifying grace is the formal cause of salvation." It is necessary to be content to say that grace was defined at the time of the Council of Trent as the formal cause of salvation, but today it is necessary to define it *otherwise*, and that this *passé* definition is no longer current and thus is *no longer true*, because a doctrine which is no longer current, as was said, is a false doctrine.¹⁰

The answer will be: For the idea of formal cause one can substitute *another equivalent idea*. Here one is satisfied by mere words (by insisting first on *another* and then on an *equivalent*), especially since it is not verbal equivalence, rather, it is *another idea*. What happens even to the *idea of truth*?¹¹

Thus the very serious question continues to resurface: Does the conciliar proposition hold as true: *through conformity with the object outside the mind, and with its immutable laws, or rather through conformity with the requirements of human life which is always changing*?¹²

One sees the danger of the new definition of truth, no longer the *adequation of intellect and reality* but the *conformity of mind and life*.¹³ When Maurice Blondel in 1906 proposed this substitution, he did not foresee all of the consequences for the faith. Would he himself not be terrified, or at least very troubled?¹⁴ What "life" is meant in this definition of: "*conformity of mind and life*"? It means human life. And so then, how can one avoid the modernist definition: "*Truth is no more immutable than man himself, inasmuch as it is evolved with him, in him and through him.*"¹⁵ (Denz. 2058) One understands why Pius X said of the modernists: "*they pervert the eternal concept of truth.*"¹⁶ (Denz. 2080)

It is very dangerous to say: "Ideas change, the affirmation remains." If even the idea of truth is changing, the affirmations do not remain true in the same way, nor according to the same meaning. Then *the meaning of the Council* is no longer maintained, as one would have wished.

Unfortunately, the new definition of the truth has spread among those who forget what Pius X had said: "*We admonish professors to bear well in mind that they cannot set aside St. Thomas especially in metaphysical questions, without grave disadvantage.*"¹⁷ *A small error in principle, says Aquinas, is a great error in conclusion.*" (Encyclical *Pascendi*)

Moreover, no new definition of truth is offered in the new definition of theology: "*Theology is no more than a spirituality or religious experience which found its intellectual expression.*" And so follow assertions such as: "If theology can help us to understand spirituality, spirituality will, in the best of cases, cause our theological categories to burst, and we shall be obliged to formulate different types of theology... For each great spirituality corresponded to a great theology." Does this mean that two theologies can be true, even if their main theses are contradictory and opposite? The answer will be no if one keeps to the traditional definition of truth. The answer will be yes if one adopts the new definition of truth, conceived not in relation to being and to immutable laws, but relative to different religious experiences. These definitions seek only to reconcile us to modernism.

It should be remembered that on December 1, 1924, the Holy Office condemned 12 propositions taken from the philosophy of action, among which was number 5, or the new definition of truth: "*Truth is not found in any particular act of the intellect wherein conformity with the object would be had, as the Scholastics say, but rather truth is always in a state of becoming, and consists in a progressive alignment of the understanding with life, indeed a certain perpetual process, by which the intellect strives to develop and explain that which experience presents or action requires: by which principle, moreover, as in all progression, nothing is ever determined or fixed.*"¹⁸ The last of these condemned propositions is: "*Even after Faith has been received, man ought not to rest in the dogmas of religion, and hold fast to them fixedly and immovably, but always solicitous to remain moving ahead toward a deeper truth and even evolving into new notions, and even correcting that which he believes.*"¹⁹

Many, who did not heed these warnings, have now reverted to these errors.

But then, how can it be held that sanctifying grace is essentially supernatural grace, free, not at all

due to human nature nor to angelic nature?

By light of Revelation, St. Thomas clearly articulated this principle; the faculties, the "habits" and their acts are specified by their formal object; or the formal object of human intelligence and even that of angelic intelligence, are immensely inferior to the proper object of divine intelligence.²⁰ But if one puts aside all metaphysics, in order to be satisfied with historical study and psychological introspection, the text of St. Thomas becomes unintelligible. From this point of view, what will be maintained by traditional doctrine regarding *distinction* not being contingent upon, but necessitated by virtue of the order of grace and of nature?

On this subject, there is the recent book of Father Henri de Lubac, *Supernatural (Etudes historiques)* ["The Supernatural" in "Historical Studies"],²¹ on the probable impeccability of the angels in the natural order, in which he writes: "Nothing is said by St. Thomas regarding the distinction which would be forged later by a number of Thomistic theologians between 'God author of the natural order' and 'God author of the supernatural order' ... as if natural beatitude ... in the case of the angels would have had to result from an infallible activity, non-sinful."²²

On the contrary, St. Thomas often distinguishes the ultimate supernatural end of the ultimate natural end,²³ and regarding the devil, he says,²⁴ "*The sin of the devil was not in anything which pertains to the natural order, but according to something supernatural.*"²⁵

Thus one would become completely disinterested in the *pronuntiata maiora* (major pronouncements) of the philosophical doctrine of St. Thomas, that is in the 24 Thomist theses approved in 1916 by the Sacred Congregation of Studies.

Moreover, Father Gaston Fessard, S.J. in *Les Etudes* ["Studies"], November 1945,²⁶ speaks of the "welcome drowsiness which protects canonized Thomism, but also, as Péguy has said, 'buried it' whereas the school of thought dedicated to the contrary is full of life."

In the same review in April 1946, it was said that neo-Thomism and the decisions of the Biblical Commission are "a guardrail but not an answer." And it was proposed that Thomism be replaced, as if Leo XIII in the Encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, would have been fooled, as if Pius X, in reviving this same recommendation, had taken a false route? And on what path did those who were inspired by this new theology end up? Where but on the road of skepticism, fantasy and heresy? His Holiness, Pius XII, recently said in a published Discourse in *L'Osservatore Romano*, Dec. 19, 1946:

"There is a good deal of talk (but without the necessary clarity of concept), about a 'new theology', which must be in constant transformation, following the example of all other things in the world, which are in a constant state of flux and movement, without ever reaching their term. If we were to accept such an opinion, **what would become of the unchangeable dogmas of the Catholic Faith; and what would become of the unity and stability of that Faith?**"²⁷

★ ★ ★ ★

2. Application of New Principles to the Doctrines of Original Sin and the Eucharist

Some will no doubt say that we exaggerate, but even a small error regarding first ideas and first principles has incalculable consequences which are not foreseen by those who have likewise been fooled. The consequences of the new views, some of which we have already reviewed, have gone well beyond the forecasts of the authors we have cited. It is not difficult to see these consequences in certain typewritten papers, which have been sent (some since 1934) to clergy, seminaries, and Catholic intellectuals; one finds in them the most singular assertions and negations on original sin and the Real Presence.

At times, in these same circulated papers, before such novelties are proposed, the reader is conditioned by being told: This will appear crazy at first, however, if you look at it closely, it is not illogical. And many end up believing it. Those with superficial intelligence will adopt it, and the dictum, "*A doctrine which is not current, is no longer true*" will be out walking. Some are tempted to conclude: "It seems that the doctrine of the eternal pains of hell is no longer current, and so it is no longer true." It is said in the Gospel that one day charity will be frozen in many hearts and they will be seduced by error.

It is a strict obligation of conscience for traditional theologians to respond. Otherwise, they gravely neglect their duty, and they will be made to account for this before God.

★ ★ ★ ★

In the files copied and distributed in France in recent years (at least since 1934, some of which this writer has), the most fantastic and false doctrines

regarding original sin are taught.

In these same files, the act of *Christian Faith* is not defined as a supernatural and infallible belief according to revealed truths *on account of the authority of God Who reveals them*²⁸, but as a belief of the spirit in relation to a general outlook on the universe. This perspective reflects what is possible and *most probable* but not demonstrable. The Faith becomes an ensemble of probable opinions. From this point of view, Adam appears to be not an individual man from whom the human species is descended, but who is, instead, a collective.

Thus, from that point of view, it becomes impossible to hold to the revealed doctrine of original sin as explicated by Saint Paul, Rom. 5:18: "Therefore as by the offense of one, unto all men to condemnation; so also by the justice of one, unto all men to justification of life."²⁹ All of the Fathers of the Church, who were authorized interpreters of Scripture in its constant sacred teaching, have always meant that Adam was an individual man as after Christ, and not a collective.³⁰ But what is now proposed to us is a probability with a contrary meaning to that of the teaching of the Councils of Orange and Trent, Denz. 175, 789, 791, 793.³¹

Further, from this new point of view, the Incarnation of the Word would be merely a moment in universal evolution.

The hypothesis of the material evolution of the world is extended into the spiritual order. The supernatural world is in evolution toward the full coming of Christ.

Sin, in so far as it affects the soul, is something spiritual and thus intemporal. Thus it is of little importance for God that it took place at the beginning of the history of humanity or during the course of history.

The desire then is to change not only the expository mode of theology, *but even the nature of theology*, as well as that of dogma. No longer considered is the point of view of the faith infused by divine Revelation, and interpreted by the Church in its Councils. It is no longer a question of the Councils, but the replacement of them with a biological point of view tortuously conceived by dim artificial light only to arrive at the most fantastic points of view that recall those of Hegelian evolutionism, which allows Christian dogmas to be retained in name only.

This then is the way of the rationalists, the school most desired by the enemies of the faith, which reduces all to mere and changeable opinion so that there is no value retained in them. What remains of the word of God given to the world for the salvation of souls?

In the articles titled, "How I believe" one

"If we wish, we other Christians, to conserve to Christ the qualities which are the basis of His power and our adoration, we can do nothing better or even nothing more than accept completely the most modern ideas of Evolution. Under pressure, the union of Science and philosophy occurs, and the World more and more imposes itself on our experience and our thought as a system linked by activities gradually lifting us toward liberty of conscience. The only satisfying interpretation of this process is that of regarding it as irreversible and convergent. Thus before we arrived, there was a *universal cosmic Center*, where all leads, where All is felt, or all merge into each other. Ah, it is the physical pole of the universal. Evolution is necessary to locate and recognize the plenitude of Christ ... By discovering the apex of the world, evolution renders Christ, and all that He gave in service of making sense of the world, possible, and also makes evolution possible.

"I am perfectly aware of the staggering proportions of this idea ... but, by imagining a parallel wonder, I can do nothing else but note, in terms of physical reality, the juridical expressions in the Church's deposit its Faith ... I have unhesitatingly come to the realization that I can only go in that direction which seems able to let me progress, and consequently, to save my Faith.

"In the first place, Catholicism deceived me with its narrow definitions of the World, and by its failure to understand the role of Matter. Now, I recognize that by means of the Incarnation of God, it was revealed to me that I am only able to be saved by uniting myself to the universe. And my most profound 'pantheistic' hopes are guided, reassured and fulfilled by this same thrust (into the universe). *The World around me, becomes divine ...*

"A general convergence of religions toward a Christ-universal, who, fundamentally, fulfills everyone: this appears to me to be the only conversion possible to the World, and the only form imaginable for the Religion of the future."³³

Thus the material world would have evolved toward spirit, and the world of the spirit would evolve naturally, that is to say toward the supernatural order and toward the fullness of Christ. Thus, the Incarnation of the World, the mystical body, the universal Christ would be moments of Evolution, and based on this view of a constant progress from the beginning, it would seem that there was not a fall at the beginning of the history of humanity, but a constant progress of good which triumphs over evil according to the same laws of evolution. Original sin in us would be the result of man's faults, which had exercised a deadly influence on humanity.

See then what remains of the Christian dogmas in this theory which distances itself from our Credo in proportion to its approach to Hegelian evolutionism.

In the above cited work, the writer said: "I have taken the only road that seems possible to me for making progress and consequently, for saving my Faith." This therefore means that the Faith itself only saves if it progresses, and it changes so much that one can no longer recognize the Faith of the Apostles, nor that of the Fathers of the Councils. It is a way of applying the principle of the new theology: "A doctrine which is no longer current, is no longer true" and for some, it suffices that it is no longer current in certain quarters. From this emerges that the truth is always in fieri, never immutable. The Faith is the conformity to judgment, not with being and its necessary laws, but with life, which is constantly and forever evolving. Here exactly is where the propositions condemned by the Holy Office, December 1, 1924, lead, and which we have quoted above:³⁴ ***"No abstract proposition can have in itself immutable truth. Even after Faith has been received, man ought not to rest in the dogmas of religion, and hold fast to them fixedly and immovably, but always solicitous to remain moving ahead toward a deeper truth and even evolving into new notions, and even correcting that which he believes."***³⁵

★ ★ ★ ★

We have another example of the same deviation in the typewritten papers on the Real Presence, which have been circulating for some

months among the clergy. These say that, formerly, the real problem with the Real Presence was not well posed: "The response to all of the difficulties that were posed was: Christ is *present after the manner of a substance* ... This explication did not touch upon the real problem. We add that in its deceptive clarity, it suppressed the religious mystery. Strictly speaking, there is no longer a mystery there, there is nothing more than a marvel."

Thus it is St. Thomas who did not know how to pose the problem of the Real Presence and his solution: *the presence of the Body of Christ by mode of substance*³⁶ would be illusory; its clarity is a *deceptive clarity*.

We are warned that the new explication being proposed "evidently implies that the method of reflection substitutes the Cartesian and Spinozan for the scholastic method".

A bit further on, concerning *transubstantiation*, one reads: "This word is not without inconvenience, like that of original sin. It responds to the manner in which the Scholastics conceived of and defined this transformation and *their definition is inadmissible*."

Here the writer distances himself not only from St. Thomas, but from the Council of Trent³⁷, because it (the Council) defined *transubstantiation* as true by faith, and even said: "*a change which the Catholic Church most fittingly calls transubstantiation*."³⁸ Today these new theologians say:

"Not only is this word inconvenient, ... it corresponds to an inadmissible concept and definition."

"In the Scholastic perspective, in which the reality of the thing is 'the substance', the thing may not really change, only if the substance changes ... by the transubstantiation. According to the current view, where, by virtue of the offering which was made according to a rite determined by Christ, *the bread and the wine became the efficacious symbol of the sacrifice of Christ, and consequently of the spiritual presence, and their religious being was changed, not only their substance*.³⁹ And also: "This is what we can designate by transubstantiation."

But it is clear that it is no longer the transubstantiation defined by the Council of Trent, "*that singular conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the entire substance of the*

wine into the blood, the species of the bread and wine only remaining".⁴⁰ It is evident that the sense of the Council is not maintained by the introduction of these new notions. The bread and the wine have become only "the efficacious symbols of the spiritual presence of Christ."

This brings us uniquely close to the modernist position which does not affirm the Real Presence of the Body of Christ in the Eucharist, but which only says from a religious and practical point of view: Comport yourself toward the Eucharist the same way you behave with regard to the humanity of Christ.

In these same circulated papers quite the same is done to the mystery of the Incarnation: "Although Christ is truly God, one cannot say that, because of Him, God was present in the land of Judea ... God was no more present in Palestine than anywhere else. The *efficacious* sign of this divine presence was manifested in Palestine in the First Century of our epoch, and this is all that one can say."⁴¹

Finally the same writer adds: "The problem of the causality of the sacraments is a false problem, born of a false method for posing the question."

★ ★ ★ ★

We do not think that the writers whom we have discussed abandoned the doctrine of St. Thomas. Rather, they never adhered to it, nor ever understood it very well. This is saddening and disquieting.

Wouldn't it be that only skeptics can be formed through this type of teaching, since nothing certain is proposed in place of St. Thomas? Moreover, they pretend to submit to the directions of the Church, but what is the substance of this submission?

A professor of theology wrote to me:

"In effect, the very notion of the truth has been put into debate, and without fully realizing it, thus revisiting modernism in thought as in action. The writings that you have spoken to me about are much read in France. It is true that they exercise a huge influence on the average type of soul. They have little effect on serious people. It is necessary to write for those who have the sincere desire to be enlightened."

Surely, the Church not only recognized the authority of St. Thomas in the domain of theology, but, by extension, also in philosophy. Contrary to their assertions, the Encyclical, *Aeterni patris* of Leo XIII speaks above all of the philosophy of St. Thomas.

Likewise, the 24 Thomistic theses proposed in 1916 by the Sacred Congregation of Studies are of a philosophical order, and if these *pronunciata maiora* of St. Thomas are not certified, then how can his theology have value, since they are constantly reiterated in the philosophy? Finally, we have already cited Pius X, who wrote: "*We admonish professors to bear well in mind that they cannot set aside St. Thomas especially in metaphysical questions, without grave disadvantage.*"¹⁷ **A small error in principle, says Aquinas, is a great error in conclusion.**" (Encyclical *Pascendi*)

From whence do these trends come? A good analyst wrote to me:

"We are harvesting the fruits of the unguarded attendance of university courses. Those who have attempted to attend the classes of the masters of modernist thought in order to convert them have allowed themselves to be converted by them. Little by little, they come to accept their ideas, their methods, their disdain of scholasticism, their historicism, their idealism and all of their errors. If this is the result for those already formed, it is surely perilous for the others."

☆☆☆☆

Conclusion: Whither the New Theology?

It revisits modernism. Because it accepted the proposition which was intrinsic to modernism: that of substituting, as if it were illusory, the traditional definition of truth: *aequatio rei et intellectus* (the adequation of intellect and reality), for the subjective definition: *adequatio realis mentis et vitae* (the adequation of intellect and life). That was more explicitly stated in the already cited proposition, which emerged from the philosophy of action, and was condemned by the Holy Office, December 1, 1924: "*Truth is not found in any particular act of the intellect wherein conformity with the object would be had, as the Scholastics say, but rather truth is always in a state of becoming, and consists in a progressive alignment of the understanding with life, indeed a certain perpetual process, by which the intellect strives to develop and explain that which experience presents or action requires: by which principle, moreover, as in all progression, nothing is ever determined or fixed.*"¹⁸ (v. *Monitore ecclesiastico*, 1925, t. I, p. 194.)

The truth is no longer the conformity of

judgment to intuitive reality and its immutable laws, but the conformity of judgment to the exigencies of action, and of human life which continues to evolve. The philosophy of being or ontology is substituted by the philosophy of action which defines truth as no longer a function of being but of action.

Thus is modernism reprised: "*Truth is no more immutable than man himself, inasmuch as it is evolved with him, in him and through him.*"⁴² As well, Pius X said of the modernists, "*they pervert the eternal concept of truth.*"

This is what our mentor, Father M.B. Schwalm previewed in his articles in *Revue thomiste*, (1896 through 1898)⁴³ on the philosophy of action, on the moral dogmatism of Father Labertbonnière, on the crisis of contemporary apologetics, on the illusions of idealism, and on the dangers that all of these posed to the Faith.

But while many thought that Father Schwalm had exaggerated, little by little they conceded the right to cite the new definition of truth, and they more or less ceased defending the traditional definition of truth, as well as the conformity of judgment to intuitive being and the immutable laws of non-contradiction, of causality, etc. For them, the truth is no longer *that which is*, but *that which is becoming* and is constantly and always changing.

Thus to cease to defend the traditional definition of truth by permitting it to be illusory, it is then necessary to substitute the vitalist and evolutionary. This then leads to complete relativism and is a very serious error.

Moreover, this leads to saying what the enemies of the Church wish to lead us to say. When one reads their recent works, one sees that they are completely content and that they themselves propose interpretations of our dogmas, whether it be regarding original sin, *cosmic evil*, the Incarnation, Redemption, the Eucharist, the final universal reintegration, *the cosmic Christ*, the convergence of all religions toward a universal cosmic center.⁴⁴

One understands why the Holy Father in his recent speech published in the September 19, 1946, issue of *L'Osservatore Romano*, said, when speaking of the "new theology": "*If we were to accept such an opinion, what would become of the unchangeable dogmas of the Catholic Faith; and what would become of the unity and stability of that Faith?*"

Further, since Providence only permits evil for a good reason, and since we see all about us an excellent reaction against the errors we have emphasized herein, we can then hope that these deviations shall be the occasion of a true doctrinal renewal, achieved through a profound study of the works of St. Thomas, whose value is more and more

apparent when compared to today's intellectual disarray.⁴⁵

Footnotes:

1. 1944, p. 219
2. Emphasis added.
3. *ibid.*, p. 213 ff.
4. p. 224.
5. "Philosophiae rationalis ac theologiae studia et alumnorum in his disciplinis institutionem professores omnino pertractant ad Angelici Doctoris rationem, doctrinam, et principia, eaque sancte teneant." Code of Canon Law, Can. 1366, n.2
6. *op. cit.*, p. 221
7. *ibid.*
8. I have explained this more fully in *Le Sens commun, la philosophie de l'être et les formules dogmatiques* ["Common Sense: The philosophy of being and dogmatic formulae"] 4th edition, 1936, p. 362ff.
9. CF. Denzinger, 799, 821
10. Further it is defined that the infused virtues (above all the theological virtues), which derive from habitual grace, are qualities, permanent principles of supernatural and meritorious supernatural operations; it is thus necessary that habitual grace or sanctifying grace (by which we are in a state of grace), from which these virtues proceed as from their source, are themselves a *permanently infused quality* and not at all a motion like actual grace. Thus it is much before St. Thomas that Faith, hope and charity were conceived as *infused virtues*. What could be clearer? Why revert to Thomas' era under the pretext of preempting these questions, and of putting into doubt the most certain and fundamental truths? To do so is an indication of the intellectual disarray of our times.
11. Mr. Maurice Blondel wrote in *Les Annals de Philosophie chrétienne* ["The Annals of Christian Philosophy"], June 15, 1906, p. 235: "For the abstract and chimerical *adaequatio vel et intellectus* one substitutes methodical research, *l'adaequatio realis mentis et vitae*." It is not without great responsibility that one calls "chimerical" the traditional definition of the truth defined for centuries in the Church, and that one speaks of it by *substituting* another, in every area that comprises the theological Faith. Have the further works of Blondel corrected this deviation? We are unable to ascertain that. He also says in *L'Être et les êtres*, 1935, p. 415 "Any intellectual evidence, even that of absolute principles themselves, and that have an ontological value, impose on us a constrained form of certainty." In order to admit to the ontological value of these principles, one must have a *free choice*, and that by means of this choice, their ontological value is thus only probable. But it is necessary to admit according to the necessity of action *secundum conformitatem mentis et vitae*. It can not be otherwise if one substitutes the *philosophy of action* for the *philosophy of being* or ontology. Thus truth was defined not as a function of being, but of action. Everything was changed. An error regarding the first Idea of truth gives rise to an error regarding all the rest. See also in *La Pensée* of Blondel (1934) V.I, p. 39, 130-136, 347, 355; and V. II. P. 65 ff., 90, 96-196.
12. *per conformitatem cum ente extramentali et legibus eius immutabilibus, an per conformitatem cum exigentiis vitae humanae quae semper evolvitur?* (Editors Note: Anytime that Fr. Garrigou-Lagrange employed Latin, we have rendered the text in English and the Latin in footnote.)
13. "no longer *adaequatio rei et intellectus*, but *conformitas mentis et vitae*"
14. Another theologian, whom we shall cite further on, asks us to say that at the time of the Council of Trent the *transubstantiation* was conceived as the changing, the conversion of the substance of the bread into that of the Body of Christ, but that today it has come to be thought of as the *transubstantiation*, without this changing of substance, meaning that the substance of the bread, which remains, becomes the efficacious sign of the Body of Christ. And that this pretends to conserve the sense of the Council!
15. "Veritas non est immutabilis plusquam ipse homo, quippe quae cum ipso, in ipso et per ipsum evolvitur." (Denz. 2058)
16. "aeternam veritatis notionem pervertunt." (Denz 2080)
17. "Magistros autem monemus, ut rite hoc teneant Aquinatem vel parum deserere, praesertim in re metaphysica, non sine magno detrimento esse. Parvus error in principio, sic verbis ipsius Aquinatis licet uti, est magnus in fine." (Encyclical Pascendi)
18. "conformitas cum obiecto, ut aiunt scholastici, sed veritas est semper in fieri, consistitque in adaequatione progressiva intellectus et vitae, scil. in motu quodam perpetuo, quo intellectus evolvere et explicare nititur id quod parit experientia vel exigit actio: ea tamen lege ut in toto progressu nihil unquam ratum fixumque habeatur." The last of these condemned propositions is: "Etiam post fidem conceptam, homo non debet quiescere in dogmatibus religionis, eisque fixe et immobiliter adhaerere, sed semper anxius manere progrediendi ad ulteriorem veritatem, nempe evolvendo in novus sensus, immo et corrigendo id quod credit."
19. These condemned propositions are found in *Monitore ecclesiastico*, 1925, p. 194; in *Documentation catholique*, 1925, V. I. p. 771 ff., and in *Praelectiones Theologiae naturalis* by Father Descoqs, 1932, VI, p. 150, V. II, p. 287ff.
20. *The Deity or the intimate life of God*, cf. 1a, q. 12, a.4.
21. 1946, p. 254.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 275.
23. CF. 1st, q. 23, a. 1: "*Finis ad quem res creatae ordinatur a Deo est duplex. Unus, qui excedit proportionem naturae creatae et facultatem, et hic finis est vita aeterna, quae in divina visione consistit: quae est supra naturam cuiuslibet creaturae, ut supra habitum est 1st, q. 12, a. 4. Alius autem finis est naturae creatae proportionatus, quem scil. res creata potest attingere sec. Virtutem suae naturae.*" Item 1st. lind, q. 62, a. 1: "*Est autem duplex hominis beatitudo, sive felicitas, ut supra dictum est, q. 3. A. 2 ad 4; 1. 5, a.5. Una quidem proportionata humanae naturae, ad quam scil. homo prevenire potest per principia suae naturae. Alia autem est beatitudo, naturam hominis excedens.*"
- Item de Veritate, q. 14, a. 2: "*Est autem duplex hominis bonum ultimum. Quorum unum est proportionatum naturae ... haec est felicitas de qua philosophi locuti sunt ... Aliud est bonum naturae humanae proportionem excedens.*" If one no longer admits to the classical distinction between the order of nature and that of grace, one will say that grace is the normal and obligatory achievement of nature, and the concession of such a favor does not remain less, one says, free, like creation and all that follows it, because creation is no longer necessary. To which Father Descoqs, S.J. in his little book, *Autour de la crise du Transformisme* ["On the crisis of Transformism"], 2nd edition, 1944, p. 84, very legitimately responds: "This explication seems to us in distinct opposition to the most explicit Catholic teachings. It also contains an evidently erroneous conception of grace. Creation is never a grace in the theological sense of the word, grace only being able to be found in relation to nature. In such a perspective, the supernatural order disappears."
24. *De malo*, 1.16, a.3.
25. "*Peccatum diaboli non fuit in aliquo quod pertinet ad ordinem naturalem, sed secundum aliquid supernaturale.*" Item 1a, 1.63, a. 1, ad 3.
26. p. 269-270
27. "*Plura dicta sunt, at non satis explorata ratione 'de nova theologia' quae cum universis semper volentibus rebus, una volvatur, semper itura, numquam perventura. Si talis opinio amplectenda esse videatur, quid fiet de numquam immutandis catholicis dogmatibus, quid de fidei unitate et stabilitate?*"
28. *propter auctoritatem Dei revelantis.*
29. "*Sicut per nescius delictum in omnes homines in condemnationem, sic et per unius iustitiam in omnes homines in justificationem vitae. Sicut enim per inobedientiam unius peccatores constituti sunt multi, ita per unius obeditionem iusti constituentur multi.*" Rom. V, 18.
30. CF. *L'Épître aux Romains* ["The Epistle to the Romans"], by Father M. J. Lagrange O.P. 3rd Edition, Commentary on chapter V.
31. The difficulties for the positivistic sciences and for prehistory were exposed in the article "*Polygenism du Dict, de théol. Cath.*" The authors of this article, A. and J. Bouyssonie clearly distinguished, section 2536, the purview of philosophy as being "Where the naturalist, inasmuch as he is one, is incompetent." It would have been well if, in that same article, the question had been treated from three points of view: the positive sciences, philosophy and theology, particularly in relation to dogma and original sin. According to several theologians, the hypothesis that before Adam there were men on earth who were of the human race, is not contrary to the faith. But according to Scripture, the human species which is dispersed over the entire earth, derives from Adam, Gen. III. 5...20, Wis. X, I: Rom V 12, 18, 19; Act. Ap. XVII 26.

Also regarding the philosophical point of view, a free intervention of God in creating the human soul was necessary, and even for preparing the body to receive it. The engendering of an inferior nature cannot however produce this superior state of his species; more comes out of less, contrary to the principle of causality.

Finally, as in the quoted article, col. 2535, "According to the mutationists (of today), a unique seed gave rise to the new species. *The species was begun by an exceptional (superior) individual.*"

32. p. 15.

33. Emphasis added. The same kind of nearly fantastic ideas are found in an article by Father Teilhard de Chardin, "*Life and Planets*," published in *les Études*, May 1946, especially p. 158-160 and 168. — See also *Cahiers du Monde nouveau* ["New World Notebooks"], August 1946, also by Father de Chardin, "*Un grand Événement qui se dessine: le Planétisation humaine.*" ["A great event is being planned: Human Planetization"] [Translator's note: Without reading this article, it is difficult to know Teilhard de Chardin's meaning which could variously mean something as banal as "space travel" or more exotically, the "beaming up of consciousness," which would be commensurate with his notions on man evolving toward and to "pure mind" or the *noosphere*. — SMR]

I have also recently quoted a work by the same author, taken from *Études*, 1921, V. II, p. 543, where he spoke of "The impossibility determining our absolute beginning in the order of phenomenon." — To which, Messrs. Sale and Lafont legitimately responded in *L'Évolution régressive* ["Regressive Evolution"], p. 47: "Isn't creation an absolute beginning?" The Faith tells us that God daily creates the souls of babies, and that in the beginning He created the spiritual soul of the first man. For Him the miracle is an absolute beginning which is not at all repugnant to reason.

CF: on this point, P. Descoqs, S.I., *Autour de la crise du transformisme* ["On the crisis of transformation."], 2nd edition, 1944, p. 85.

Finally, as Father Descoqs remarked, *Ibid*, p. 2 and 7, the theologians should not be speaking so much about evolutionism and transformism, since the best minds such as P. Lemoué, Professor at the Museum writes: "Evolution is a kind of dogma which these priests do not believe, but that they hold for their people. Thus it is necessary to have the courage to say so, so that the men of the next generation will conduct their research by other methods." CF. Conclusion of V. 5 of *L'Encyclopédie française* (1937). Dr. H. Rouvière, professor in the Department of Medicine of Paris, member of the Academy of Medicine, also writes in *Anatomie philosophique, La finalité dans l'Évolution* ["Philosophical anatomies (or forms): Finality in Evolution"] p. 37: "The doctrine of transformism collapses upon itself ... The majority of biologists have distanced themselves from it because the defenders of transformism have never produced the least proof to support their theory and everything known about evolution contradicts their contentions."

34. *Nulla propositio abstracta potest haberi ut immutabiliter vera.* "Etiam post fidem conceptam, homo non debet quiescere in dogmatibus religionis, eisque fixe et immobiliter adhaerere, sed semper anxius manere progrediendi ad ulteriorem veritatem, nempe evolvendo in novos sensus, immo et corrigendo id quod credit." CF: *Monitore ecclesiastico*, 1925, p. 194.

35. CF: *Monitore ecclesiastico*, 1925, p. 194.

36. *praesentia corporis Christi per modum substantiae*

37. sess XIII, cap. 4 and can. 2 (Denz. 877,884)

38. "*quam quidem conversionem catholica Ecclesia aptissime transsubstantiationem appellat.*"

39. In the same article we read: "In the scholastics' perspective, the idea of thing-sign was lost. In an Augustinian universe, where a material thing is not only itself, but rather a sign of spiritual realities, one can say that a thing, being through the will of God the sign of another thing, which it was by nature, [that thing] might become itself other without changing appearance."

In the scholastic perspective, the idea of thing-sign is not lost at all. Saint Thomas says, 1st, q. 1, a. 10: "*Auctor S. Scripturae est Deus, in cuius potestate est, ut non solum voces ad significandum accommodet (quod etiam homo facere potest) sed etiam res ipsas.*" Thus Isaac who prepared to be sacrificed is the figure of Christ, and the manna is the figure of the Eucharist. St. Thomas notes this when speaking of this sacrament. But by the Eucharist consecration the bread does not only become the sign of the Body of Christ, and the wine the sign of His Blood, as the sacramentaries

of the Protestants are thought to be. CF. D.T.C. art. *Sacramentaire*; but as it was formally defined at the Council of Trent, the substance of bread is *changed* into that of the Body of Christ which was rendered present *per modum substantiae* under the species of bread. And this is not only germane to the theologians of the era of the Council regarding the consecration. It is the immutable truth defined by the Church.

40. "*conversio totius substantiae panis in Corpus et totius substantiae vini in Sanguinem, manentibus duntaxat speciebus panis et vini.*" Denz. 884.

41. St. Thomas clearly distinguished the three presences of God: first, the general presence of God in all the creatures which He brought into existence (1st. q. 8, a. 1); 2nd, the special presence of God in the just by grace. He is in them as in a temple, acknowledged by a recognizable quasi-experienced object., q. 43, a. 3; 3rd, the presence of the Word in the humanity of Jesus through the hypostatic union. Thus it is certain that after the Incarnation God was more present on the earth in Judea than elsewhere. But when one thinks that St. Thomas has not even known how to pose these problems, then one goes off into all types of flights of fancy, and returns to modernism with the off-handedness that can be read on every one of these pages.

42. "*Veritas non est immutabilis plusquam ipse homo, quippe quae cum ipso, in ipso et per ipsum evolvitur.*" (Denz. 2058)

43. 1896, p. 36, section 413; 1897, p. 62, 239, 627; 1898, p. 578

44. Authors such as Téder and Papus, in their explication of *martinist doctrine*, teach a mystical pantheism and a neo-gnosticism by which everything comes out of God by emanation (there is then a fall, a *cosmic evil*, a *sui generis* original sin), and all aspire to be *re-integrated* into the divinity, and *all* shall arrive there. This is in many recent occultists' works on the *modern Christ*, and *fulness in terms of astral light*, ideas not at all those of the Church and which are blasphemous inversions because they are always the pantheistic negation of the true supernatural, and often even the negation of the distinction of moral good and of moral evil, in order to allow only that which is a useful or desired good, including cosmic or physical evil, which with the reintegration of all, without exception, will disappear.

45. Certainly we admit that the *true mystical experience*, which proceeds in the just from the gifts of the Holy Spirit, above all, the gift of wisdom, *confirms the faith*, because it demonstrates to us that the revealed mysteries correspond to our most profound hopes, and arouses the highest of those hopes. We recognize that there is a truth of life, a *conformity of the spirit, with the life of the man of good will, and a peace which is the sign of truth*. But this mystical experience supposes the infused faith, and the act of faith itself supposes faith in the revealed mysteries.

Likewise, as the Vatican Council expresses it, we are able to have, by the natural light of reason, the certainty that *God exists as the author of nature*. Solely because of that, it is necessary that the principles of these proofs, in particular that of causality, are *true per conformitatem ad ens extramentale*, and that they are demonstrable through sufficiently *objectively proofs* (subject *a priori* to the free choice of men of good will), and not only through a sufficiently subjective proof, as that of the Kantian one of the existence of God.

Finally the *practical truth* of prudence (*per conformitatem ad intentionem rectam*) supposes that our intention is truly strictly fixed on the ultimate end of man, and the judgment of the end of men must be true *secundum mentis conformitatem ad realitatem extramentalem*. CF. I II. Q. 19, a. 3, ad 2

This article was reprinted from the August, 1998 issue of *Catholic Family News* — a Roman Catholic monthly published 12 times a year. Extra copies of this reprint may be obtained for \$2.50 from:

Catholic Family News

In U.S.A: M.P.O. Box 743, Niagara Falls, NY 14302

In Canada: P.O. Box 694, Niagara Falls ON L2E 6V5

Subscriptions to *Catholic Family News* are obtainable at a special price of \$18.00 per year (\$25.00 Canadian plus GST). Sample issues available upon request. List of reprints from various issues available — by sending a self-addressed stamped business envelope.

Father Reginald Garrigou-Lagrance, O.P. (1877-1964)

Father Reginald Garrigou-Lagrance, O.P. (1877-1964) was a philosopher and theologian of great wisdom, learning and holiness, one of the greatest theologians of the 20th Century. Born in Auch, France, as a young man he studied medicine at the University of Bordeaux before entering the Dominican Order in 1897. He completed his ecclesiastical studies under the direction of A. Gardeil. From 1909 until 1960 he taught fundamental, dogmatic and spiritual theology at what is now called the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (the Angelicum) in Rome, and he served during the latter part of his career as a consulter to the Holy Office and other Roman congregations. Beginning around age 27, he wrote more than 500 books and articles, many of which have been translated from the original French or Latin into other languages.

Father Garrigou-Lagrance was a zealous proponent of the doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas as expounded by the *classical* commentators of the Dominican school — Cajetan (Tommaso de Vio), Báñez, John of St. Thomas and Charles Billuart. He combined a great respect for the past with an understanding and appreciation of the intellectual and spiritual needs of his own time. His principal theses are set forth systematically in his *La Synthèse thomiste (Reality: A Synthesis of Thomistic Thought)*. In philosophy his first outstanding work was *Le sens commun, la philosophie de l'être et les formules dogmatiques suivi d'une étude sur la valeur de la critique moderniste des preuves thomistes de l'existence de Dieu* (1909), a work written against Modernism and its conception of the evolution of dogma. There he reaffirmed the validity of the philosophy of being. Of moderate realism, and of Aristotelian-Thomistic metaphysics, which is simply the development of elementary and primordial ideas by natural intelligence. Then turning to dogmatic formula which he did not wish to tie to any philosophical system, he showed their rational value and stability. Knowledge of dogma and of dogmatic expressions and formulas can progress, but the dogma remains always immutable in itself. Father Garrigou-Lagrance's most important philosophical work was *God — His Existence and His Nature: A Thomistic Solution of Certain Agnostic Antinomies*; in this work he laid great stress on the Thomistic doctrine concerning the identity of essence and existence in God and the real distinction of essence and existence in the creature.

The major part of Father Garrigou-Lagrance's work, however, was theological. His classic work entitled *De revelatione ab ecclesia proposita* (1918, rev. ed. 1932) presented apologetics as a theological rather than a philosophical science, as a rational defense of divine revelation made by reason under positive direction by Faith. He endeavored to protect the notion of Faith as an essentially supernatural gift that transcends by far the elaborations of human thought and cannot be the fruit of a rational syllogism, which can lead the mind no further than to the judgment of credibility; at the same time he strove to avoid the pitfall of a fideism that would ignore reason and human study. Father Garrigou-Lagrance's masterly commentary (7 vol.) on the *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas is a comprehensive development and treatment of the truths of faith according to the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas.

It is probably for his theology of the spiritual life that Father Garrigou-Lagrance is most well-known; in spiritual theology the principal points of his doctrine were established in the light of Thomistic teaching. Adopting the position of Father John Arinterro, O.P., he insisted vigorously on the universal call to holiness and therefore to infused contemplation and to the mystical life as the normal ways of holiness or Christian perfection. Among his most fundamental works in this field are *Christian Perfection and Contemplation*, *Les Trois conversions et les trois voies (The Three Ways of the Spiritual Life)*; *The Love of God and the Cross of Jesus*; *The Three Ages of the Interior Life*; *De sanctificatione sacerdotum secundum exigentias temporis nostri (The Priesthood and Perfection)*; and *De unione sacerdotis cum Christo Sacerdote et Victima (The Priest in Union with Christ)*. He also wrote a book entitled *Mère Françoise de Jésus, fondatrice de la Compagnie de la Vierge*, as well as numerous articles for *La Vie Spirituelle* and *Angelicum*.

Other books of Father Garrigou-Lagrance which have been translated into English (in addition to those whose titles are given above in English) include: *Christ the Savior*; *The Theological Virtues—vol. 1: Faith, Grace; Life Everlasting, The One God; Our Savior and His Love for Us; Predestination, Providence; The Trinity and God the Creator; The Mother of the Savior and Our Interior Life; Beatitude* (moral theology, on human acts and habits), and his retreat conferences published posthumously as *The Last Writings of Reginald Garrigou-Lagrance*.

Taken from *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*